

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 201242Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6608

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9358

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: RELEASE OF US CITIZENS FROM PDRY

REF: A. CAIRO 9120 B. CAIRO 9167

1. FOLLOWING ARE SUMMARIES OF SEPTEMBER 19 DEBRIEFINGS
BY EMBOFFS OF ROBERT KOPP AND VINCENT TORHAN. FULL
DETAILS FOLLOWING BY AIRGRAM.

2. KOPP CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT HE WAS VICTIM OF
WELL-ORGANIZED PROVOCATION IN ADEN STAGED BY PDRY
SECURITY SERVICE. VARIOUS OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH
"ORDINARY" ADENIS WERE RECORDED AND USED AGAINST HIM
IN SUBSEQUENT INTERROGRATIONS. ALL TRULY INNOCENT
PDRY CITIZENS WHO CAME IN CONTACT WITH KOPP WERE ARRESTED
IMMEDIATELY AFTER CONTACT AND NOT AFTER KOPP'S ARREST.
KOPP BELIEVES THAT HE SPENT JANUARY 23, 1973, TO JULY
27, 1974, PERIOD UNDER CONTROL OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
AUTHORITIES BECAUSE, WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED, LARGE
QUANTITY OF MAPS (PHOTOSTATS FROM UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA IN BERKELEY MAP ROOM) WERE FOUND IN
HIS SUIT CASE. MAPS WERE PRIMARILY OF AREAS OF
ARCHEOLOGICAL INTEREST, ALTHOUGH KOPP DESIRE TO
VISIT SOCOTRA (AND PRESENCE OF SEVERAL MAPS OF
SOCOTRA) OBVIOUSLY AROUSED INTEREST OF PDRY
MILITARY. KOPP REPORTS THAT BULK OF HIS
INTERROGATION UNDER MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AUSPICES
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WAS CONDUCTED BY CUBANS WEARING CIVILIAN CLOTHES.

DURING INITIAL PHASES OF INTERROGATION, KOPP ADMITTED TO HAVING BEEN ASKED BY UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA CHAIRMAN OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES PROFESSOR BRINNER (BELIEVE THIS PROPER SPELLING) TO PROVIDE INFORMATION CONCERNING PDRY POLITICAL EVENTS. IN ADDITION, KOPP STATED THAT HIS RESEARCHES WERE UNDER USG AUSPICES AS HE (FALSELY) STATED HE WAS ON A NDEA GRANT.

3. ON JULY 27, 1974, KOPP WAS TRANSFERRED TO JURISDICTION OF PDRY STATE SECURITY APPARATUS (JIHAZ AMN AL-THAWRA). EVENTUALLY, AFTER SERIOUS BEATINGS, NOVEMBER 9, 1974, KOPP SIGNED A CONFESSION IN WHICH HE STATED THAT HE HAD "INDIRECTLY" WORKED FOR THE CIA. BY "INDIRECTLY", KOPP INFORMED PDRY AUTHORITIES THAT HE MEANT THAT PROFESSOR BRINNER FORWARDED HIS REPORTS TO THE CIA IN WASHINGTON. IN ADDITION, KOPP INFORMED PDRY AUTHORITIES THAT THE CENTER FOR ARAB STUDIES ABROAD (CASA) WAS A CIA FRONT ORGANIZATION, AS PROFESSOR BRINNER HAD PLACED STUDENTS WITH THE CENTER IN THE PAST. AFTER KOPP'S CONFESSION, HIS TREATMENT MARKEDLY IMPROVED AND HE WAS NO LONGER SUBJECTED TO BEATINGS. HOWEVER IN FEBRUARY, 1975, KOPP SUFFERED A RELATIVELY SERIOUS EMOTIONAL BREAKDOWN, AFTER WHICH PRISON AUTHORITIES TRANSFERRED ENGLISH SPEAKING PRISONER TO KOPP'S CELL TO KEEP HIM COMPANY. TREATMENT OF KOPP BECAME EVEN BETTER AFTER AUGUST 25, 1975, ON WHICH DATE PRISON DIRECTOR INFORMED KOPP THAT HE WOULD BE RETURNED TO US.

4. OTHER THAN PHYSICAL ABUSES OF KOPP DESCRIBED REFTEL, KOPP RECEIVED SPORADIC BEATINGS FROM HIS PDRY CAPTORS, BUT HE REPORTED NO SUSTAINED PERIODS OF CONTINUED PHYSICAL ABUSES. REASON FOR KOPP BEING PLACED IN "HOT HOUSE" WAS APPARENTLY ASSASSINATION IN APRIL, 1973, OF CHIEF OF PDRY MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, BA SHUHAYB, WHICH PDRY AUTHORITIES ATTRIBUTED INTELLIGENCE/SABOTAGE NETWORK WHICH INCLUDED KOPP. FINAL CONFESSION CONCERNING CIA
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INVOLVEMENT WAS PRECEDED BY MOST VIOLENT BEATING KOPP HAD RECEIVED (IT WAS DURING THIS BEATING THAT KOPP PUNCHED FATAH PRISON DIRECTOR IN FACE) AND SEVERITY TREATMENT LED KOPP TO BELIEVE THAT HE HAD BETTER SIGN CONFESSION.

5. COMMENT: KOPP WAS APOLOGETIC CONCERNING HIS IMPLICATION OF PROFESSOR BRINNER, UNIVERSITY OF

CALIFORNIA, AND CASA PROGRAM IN CIA ACTIVITIES, BUT DOES NOT SEEM TO REALIZE POSSIBLE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR ALL THREE IN MIDDLE EAST IN FUTURE SHOULD SOVIETS AND PDRY AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE OBVIOUSLY IN COLLUSION RE KOPP INTERROGATION, DECIDE TO DISSEMINATE FALSE KOPP'S ALLEGATIONS WIDELY THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE EAST, OR AT LEAST TO SUCH PRO-PDRY FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS AS PFLP AND PDFLP.

6. THE FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF VINCENT TORHAN'S ACCOUNT OF IMPRISONMENT. TORHAN ARRIVED ADEN MARCH 13, 1973, FROM DIJBOUTI AND CONTACTED COIN DEALER, MOHAMED AL AYDRUS, WHO ON MARCH 14 SHOWED HIM AROUND ADEN AND ARRANGED CALL ON DIRECTOR OF YEMENI CURRENCY AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN SPECIMEN NOTES. ON MARCH 15, THEY VISITED LAHIJ WHERE TORHAN PURCHASED SOME DAGGERS AND TOOK NUMBER OF TOURIST-TYPE PICTURES. WHEN LEAVING LAHIJ BY TAXI AT ABOUT 1300 TO CATCH 1700 PLANE TO LEAVE ADEN THEY WERE STOPPED BY POLICE AND TAKEN BACK TO LAHIJ. TORHAN SEPARATED FROM OTHERS AND TAKEN TO AL FATAH PRISON. DIRECTOR OF PRISON CONFISCATED ALL HIS POSSESSIONS AND PUT HIM IN CELL BY HIMSELF.

7. ON MARCH 16 TORHAN WAS GIVEN SIX QUESTIONS TO ANSWER IN WRITING INCLUDING AUTOBIOGRAPHY, WHY HE CAME TO ADEN, LIST OF EVERYONE HE MET IN ADEN AND HIS ITINERARY. HE WROTE OUT DETAILED ANSWERS AND WAS TAKEN BACK TO CELL WHERE HE SPENT 33 DAYS WITH NO FURTHER QUESTIONING.

8. TOWARD END OF JUNE 1973 INTENSE QUESTIONING
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BEGAN FOR SIX-TEN HOURS A DAY BUT NOT ACCOMPANIED BY PHYSICAL ABUSE. HE WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT HIS JOB AT SUMMIT (N.J.) MEDICAL GROUP, HIS COIN DEALINGS AND TRAVELS - ALWAYS WITH AN INSINUATION THAT HE WAS A SPY AND BEING ASKED "WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO?" THIS QUESTIONING ENDED JULY 10 AND HE WAS PUT BACK IN CELL ALONE. THROUGHOUT THIS PERIOD, HE WAS RECEIVING VERY LITTLE TO EAT AND ALL REQUESTS FOR MORE FOOD WERE REFUSED. TOWARD END OF OCTOBER 1973 HE DEVELOPED SEVERE CASE OF BACILLIARY DYSENTERY. HE WAS TAKEN TO ABOUD MILITARY HOSPITAL WHERE AT INSISTENCE OF RUSSIAN DOCTOR HE SPENT ONE MONTH RECUPERATING.

9. AT END OF NOVEMBER 1973 HE WENT BACK TO PRISON

CELL WHICH HE NOW SHARED WITH TWO OTHER PRISONERS.
ON MAY 21, 1974 HE WAS TOLD THAT IF HE DID NOT
CONFESS HE WOULD SEE WHAT A "FIERCE ARAB" IS.
AT 0230 MAY 22 DIRECTOR OF PRISON MOHAMED TOOK
HIM FOR INTERROGATION. HE WAS MADE TO STAND AGAINST
WALL, DO EXERCISES, PUNCHED HARD IN FACE AND CHEST,
BEATEN WHILE SITTING IN CHAIR ON NECK, FACE AND
ANKLES WITH HEAVY STICK AND TOLD TO TELL EVERYTHING.
FINE ROPE WAS TIED TO HIS PENIS AND HIS ENTIRE
WEIGHT PULLED UP WHICH CAUSED BLEEDING AND
SCARED TORTURERS TO STOP. HE WAS ALLOWED TO WASH
UP AND THEN BROUGHT BACK FOR MORE BEATING INCLUDING
A FIVE-GALLON CAN BEING PLACED OVER HIS HEAD AND
BANGED WITH STICKS. AT THIS POINT HE FAINTED AND
WHEN HE CAME TO, DECIDED TIME HAD COME TO TELL
STORY HE HAD CONCOCTED AFTER HAVING SEEN RESULTS
OF BEATINGS OF YEMENI PRISONERS. BRIEFLY, STORY
WAS THAT HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY STATE DEPT.
OFFICIAL NAMED CHESTER ARTHUR AND ASKED TO ACT AS
COURIER BY PICKING UP ENVELOPES IN ONE COUNTRY AND
MAILING THEM IN ANOTHER. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW
IDENTIFY OF PEOPLE WHO HAD GIVEN HIM ENVELOPES,
SINCE THEY IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES ONLY BY CODE:
"ARE YOU VINCENT TORHAN THE COIN DEALER?" HE SAID
HE HAD HAD NO CONTACTS IN ADEN. IN RETURN HE GOT
EXPENSES FOR HIS TRIP PAID FOR. AFTER "CONFESSION
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HE WAS MADE TO SIGN A STATEMENT SAYING "I AM
SPY FOR US STATE DEPARTMENT." NEXT DAY HE WAS
TOLD TO WRITE OUT CONFESSION WHICH HE DID.

10. TORHAN ALSO SIGNED STATEMENT THAT HE HAD
ENTERED ADEN ILLEGALLY. HE HAD BEEN QUESTIONED
ABOUT LETTER IN HIS SUITCASE FROM SOUTH YEMENI
AIRWAYS WHICH STATED IT ILLEGAL FOR US CITIZENS
TO VISIT. TORHAN SAID LETTER HAD BEEN YEAR OLD
IN MARCH 1973 AND HE HAD FOLLOWED UP TO DATE
INFORMATION IN LKM AIRLINE BOOK WHICH SAID ONLY
REQUIREMENT WAS VISA, WHICH IN FACT HE HAD OBTAINED
AT AIRPORT. TWO WEEKS LATER DIRECTOR OF PRISON
TOLD HIM HE HAD TO SIGN SECOND "CONFESSION." HE
SAID IT WASN'T TRUE, BUT WAS TOLD TO SIGN ANYWAY
WHICH HE DID.

11. FROM JUNE 1974 ON HE HAD NO MORE QUESTIONING
AND WAS ALLOWED FOR FIRST TIME TO HAVE EXTRA FOOD
AS LONG AS HE PAID FOR IT. ON NOVEMBER 18, 1974, HE
WAS GIVEN CLOTHES AND TAKEN TO CRESENT HOTEL WHERE
HE SAW BRITISH VICE CONSUL FRANK SAVAGE. FOLLOWING

INTERVIEW SAVAGE SAID HE WOULD SEE HIM EVERY
THREE WEEKS, AND ARRANGE FOR MAIL. HE NEVER SAW
BRITISH CONSULAR OFFICER AGAIN. TREATMENT CONTINUED
TO IMPROVE AND ON SEPTEMBER 14 HE WAS NOTIFIED
AT 1800 THAT HE WAS TO BE RELEASED AND BY 1900 WAS
ON EGYPTIAN PLANE DEPARTING ADEN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONERS RELEASE, DEBRIEFINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchant0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAIRO09358
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750327-0294
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750931/aaaabbbt.tel
Line Count: 230
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 CAIRO 9120, 75 CAIRO 9167
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 DEC 2003 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RELEASE OF US CITIZENS FROM PDRY
TAGS: CASC, PINS, (TORHAN, VINCENT), (KOPP, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006